

Record

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NAMB commissions first missionaries

ATLANTA (BP) — Nineteen US-2 missionaries were being sent out to serve, but it was a universal challenge that was issued during the historic first commissioning service of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) Aug. 24.

The service was held at Peachtree Corners Church in suburban Atlanta.

"There are hundreds of people in this room right now who have been given the same ministry that (US-2 missionaries) have — the ministry of reconciliation, the ministry through which God wants to draw all men to himself," said Laurie Howell of Arkansas, who will serve two years with youth and women's evangelism in Des Moines, Iowa.

Vong Im, who will serve as director of Baptist campus ministries at the University of Minnesota, echoed her challenge, noting his fundamental call is not to ministry or missions. "I only have one call in my Christian life, and that is to be obedient to Christ. We all have that same calling," he said.

NAMB, which officially began work in June, was formed by combining of Southern Baptists' Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission in the SBC's "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring.

The US-2 program, in which individuals devote two years of their lives to serving Christ through domestic missions, formerly was a ministry of the Home Mission Board.

The missionaries will serve in positions that range from statewide youth evangelism work in California, to inner-city missions in New York City, to



FIRST NAMB MISSIONARY — Shannon Sue Bettis (right) of Pocahontas, Ark., was the first missionary to be commissioned as a missionary by the new North American Mission Board (NAMB) Aug. 24. Bettis, who will serve as a US-2 missionary doing weekday ministries in New Orleans for two years, was presented the certificate of appointment by Bob Reccord, NAMB president, during a commissioning service for 19 US-2 missionaries held at Peachtree Corners Church in suburban Atlanta. (BP photo by James Dotson)

helping build a church among native Americans in Oklahoma. Most are in their 20s, and the group includes both singles and married couples.

Bob Reccord, president of the NAMB, challenged the congregation at the commissioning service to follow the model of Jesus Christ in his dealings with people, particularly in his successive encounters with the blind beggar Bartimaeus and the tax collector Zacchaeus. Amid the noisy crowds, Christ took the time to stop, be sensitive to their needs and change their lives.

"God wants an intimate relationship with you," Reccord

said, "but then he wants to change lives through you. He always calls you to himself so that he might live with you and share with you, but then he calls you to himself so that he might send you out, so that you can make a difference in everybody else's life."

Reccord noted the word "lost" in the New Testament is actually best defined as "that which is not in its proper place." Christ, both in Scripture and today, wants to help people find their proper place in right relationship with him.

"I don't care where you are today. ... God will stop where you are, he'll touch your life and he'll absolutely change it," Reccord said.

"He'll stop right where you are to meet exactly where it is you hurt."

"This is not your mission field. This is your refueling station. He's getting ready to launch you into ... a mission field that is white unto harvest."

"It is ready to hear the news, but sometimes it is more ready to hear the news than we are ready to tell it."

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

MBCB passes proposals

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Caribbean changes

What will the future be for the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship (CBF) faced with the withdrawal of financial support from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board over the next ten years? While there were other aspects of the five-day meeting in Guyana, July 27-31, this was the main agenda item.

No clear answer emerged, but what was unanimously agreed was that there would be a CBF in the future. Started in 1970, this regional body in which the largest member is the Bahamas Baptist Missionary Convention with more than 70,000 Baptists, brings 26 Baptist groups together to focus on evangelism in particular.

In a historic moment for Guyanese Baptists, the meeting was opened by the Prime Minister Samuel Hines, who praised Baptists for their contribution in rebuilding Guyana.

Looking back

10 years ago

Sebastopol Church honors Mildred Etoile Majure Eason with a special day commemorating her 55 years of service to the church. Eason, affectionately known as "Ms. Etoile," is presented an engraved plaque by her pastor, John Sharp. The day is proclaimed "Ms. Etoile Day."

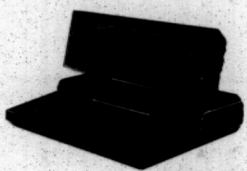
20 years ago

An experimental mission program is conducted by the Union County Association. The ministry consists of building a "game wagon" to attract children. Three mornings each week, volunteers take the wagon to area parks for games, refreshments, and puppet shows.

50 years ago

Duke K. McCall, Executive Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention, appeals from Berlin for Baptists to send food. "The war ended here two years ago, but death still stalks among the populace. Many Baptists will die this winter for they are weak from a lack of food," he writes.

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This is gambling regulation?

To hear the secular news and advertis-
ing media describe legalized gambling
in Mississippi, it's the most civic-mind-
ed enterprise a state could possibly recruit.

Having legalized gambling means never
having to say you're sorry that enough spon-
sors couldn't be lined up for a particular
event. The obsessively public relations-mind-
ed casino owners will throw money at virtu-
ally any activity as long as their logo is visible.

Gamblers have bought their way into
beauty pageants, local festivals, school
fundraisers, and sports events all
across the state of Mississippi. Scholarships,
park dedications, local improvements, even
help for gambling addicts — you name it, and
gambling promoters are willing to sponsor it
in the name of civic duty.

Gambling proponents/apolo-
gists often point to the enormous
sums of money that casinos con-
tribute to the public good each year
in taxes and government assess-
ments. Gambling may be bad for
individuals and families, but it cer-
tainly is healthy for public budgets
— and politicians who are more than
willing to accept this tainted money
into the public treasury.

Casinos are only too willing to
meet their public responsibilities.

Right? Gambling promoters are some of
the finest, most upstanding members of
our communities. Right?

Not necessarily.

Take the case of Imperial Palace, a huge
nearly-complete casino complex on Biloxi's
Back Bay. According to the Mississippi
Baptist Gambling Task Force, Imperial
Palace is built over tidelands which are
legally owned by the citizens of
Mississippi, but the casino owner has thus
far refused to enter into a lease for use of
the public tidelands over which he has
built his facility.

Imperial Palace, the worth of which is
measured in hundreds of millions of dol-
lars, is in effect a "squatter" on property
that it neither owns or has agreed to lease
— property that the U.S. Supreme Court
has ruled in prior litigation is indeed the
possession of every Mississippian.

So much for civic responsibility.

Who owns Imperial Palace? A Nevada
resident named Ralph Engelstad, a 66-
year-old Minnesota native listed in the
Forbes 400 as worth about \$425,000,000.

According to May 2, 1989 article by
Associated Press, Engelstad was fined \$1.5
million by the Nevada Gaming
Commission for throwing a casino party
on Adolph Hitler's birthday that officials
said featured Engelstad in a Nazi uniform
and bartenders sporting T-shirts that read,
"Adolf Hitler — European Tour 1939-45."

So much for being a fine, upstanding
member of the community.

The Mississippi Baptist Gambling Task
Force has also expressed concern that
despite Engelstad's large fine in Nevada
and the tidelands dispute in this state, the
Mississippi Gaming Commission (MGC) is
ignoring state law in a rush to get Imperial
Palace open as soon as possible.

A valid property title or lease agreement
is required by state law before a casino
operating license can be granted, but the
gaming commissioners don't seem to be too
worried about the
absence of a lease for
the tidelands.

Are our commission-
ers asleep at the wheel?
Is this the type of regu-
lation and stewardship
of public resources that
the people of
Mississippi intended
when gambling was
legalized?



The last time our gaming commissioners
heard from Mississippi Baptists speaking
with one voice, they were forced to back off
plans to approve a massive casino within
sight of Gulfshore Assembly in Pass
Christian.

In light of the Imperial Palace debacle,
maybe it's time they heard from us again.

Mississippi Gaming Commission

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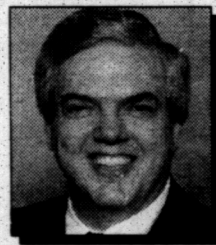
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I find it amusing that some folks
feel it important to let the music
director know that their prefer-
ences are the old songs, nothing
else, nothing less — "where's the
beef?" It seems that the old fami-
liar favorites will make a congre-
gation sing louder, and make a
better worship experience.

I remember being told to sit in
the back of a deacon's Cadillac
once as I heard some words never
to be repeated, all focused around
that person's preference in church music.
Preferences can sometimes over-ride
Christian love for one another. It seems
that Church music preference is in the
same category as the wallet, i.e., keep your
hands off. "It's my preference and that's
what we ought to do." What if our Father
wants to put more in the wallet? Do we
prevent this with our attitude? Case in
point: as a minister of music, I enjoy classi-
cal music. Its style is majestic, soaring, as
its melodies and countermelodies inter-
twine. In fact, it is just plain classy. Do I rate
everything else as substandard? No... or
my wallet would be spent within the
minute. Neither would I want to eat eggs
for breakfast every day of the year for the
rest of my life.

Contemporary church music at times
loses its message in the flurry of notes and
scooped styles. Those may very well be the
times that someone needs to say some-
thing. The message is comprised of text,
notes, and demeanor. Any one of these
three can obtrusively get in the way. When
the notes support the text, and the perfor-

GUEST OPINION:



Louder and better

By Bob Jones, minister of music
Alta Woods Church, Jackson

formance* complies with the rehearsal, then
the message is forth-right and clearly com-
municated. When the message is clear, the
format or style can be varied and the wal-
let enlarged. Really, style dims in light of
the message. To talk about style tends to
major on the minors.

All of us have music preferences, but we
must be



careful
that our
preferences do not affect our
love for one another. Think about
it, haven't we all worshiped to the country
strains of "Surely the Presence of the Lord
is in this Place", or the anthem "The

Majesty and Glory of Your
Name", or even sung the repeti-
tive chorus "Deep and Wide" in
our lifetime? Our preferences
must be couched in a spirit of
Christian love for one another
and not self-serving for our own
likes.

Finally, is louder better and is
older more worshipful? The
same God who made the heart
looks at the heart and our inmost
thoughts. Sometimes a whis-

pered "I love You" is better than a marquee
that says "God goes to Church here!" In
fact, many of our speechless moments of
worship declare His greatness. Which is
more effective: 1) to sing "O How I Love
Jesus" with little thought and heart but
with lots of volume, or 2) to hum the cho-
rus of "O How I Love Jesus" while quietly
reflecting on His love for us?

Let us never forget the Creator of the
created. What is his preference? Is he even
concerned with preferences? It may be that
he is more concerned with a person's heart.
The singer is more important than the
song.

*Performance is really a good word. What
happens in performance is the direct result of
obedience to God. The musician has
rehearsed and planned in detail how the ren-
dition will honor God. The performer exem-
plifies obedience when the performance, as
rehearsed, is projected vertical in worship of
God and not horizontal in focus of self. Any
time a Christian is obedient to God, we
ought to celebrate!

MBCB sends '98 budget to messengers

By Tim Nicholas
MBCB Communications Director

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), meeting in Jackson on Aug. 26, unanimously approved a 1998 Cooperative Program (CP) budget of \$25,546,608 that will be submitted to messengers to the 1997 Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) annual meeting at First Church, Jackson on Oct. 28-29.

The proposed budget — \$1.4 million more than the current budget — earmarks \$9,452,245 (37%) to Southern Baptist Convention causes; \$720,000 (2.82%) to MBC matching gifts to church annuity plans; \$6,532,576 (25.57%) to Mississippi Baptist institutions and agencies; and \$8,841,787 (34.61%) to MBCB work.

The MBCB portion contains a four percent cost of living increase and up to three percent merit raise for board employees.

Bobby Kirk of Doddsville, chairman of the MBCB budget committee, said the budget is based on projected CP income for 1997.

Kirk noted the Baptist Children's Village (BCV) did not ask for an increase in funding, but that in the spirit of participation in the Village's 100th anniversary drive to ask churches to underwrite operation of the Village for a day at an estimated cost of \$7,500 per day, the budget committee increased the BCV budget amount of \$500,000 by \$52,500 to pay for an additional week's expenses at Mississippi Baptists' child care agency.

Mississippi Baptist Health Systems, the newly-adopted name for Mississippi Baptist Medical Center and its affiliates, did not request CP funds for 1998. Representatives have specified that the organization plans to remain a part of MBC.

A "challenge budget" containing any gifts over the budgeted amount will be distributed 50% to Christian education in Mississippi; 25% to international missions; 15% to Mississippi missions, and 10% to North American missions.

In other business, the board voted to change the name of its annuity committee to "annuity and assistance committee," to better describe a new function which includes special financial aid to retired ministers and widowed annuitants experiencing financial problems. A total of \$100,000 was budgeted through the end of next year to help with such things as utilities and auto repairs.

A recent survey found that of the 1,176 persons receiving SBC annuity checks in Mississippi, 148 people receive \$100-\$200 per month and 177 people receive less than \$100 per month.

The board approved a rec-

ommendation from the MBCB Executive Committee concerning employees who retire with combined MBCB/church tenure of 25 years with at least five years at MBCB. The new policy will allow qualified employees to enroll for retirement and insurance benefits previously available only to those employees with at least 10 years at MBCB.

Also, the board approved funding for three site grants, including:

- ◆ \$15,000 for the Hillview mission in Carroll Association,
- ◆ \$40,000 for the Riverside mission in Clay Association.
- ◆ \$125,000 for the Deerfield mission in Metro Association.

Eleven grants were made for hardship situations for churches and church staffs around the state.

The board approved small price increases at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian and Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko.

For example, the youth conference plan cost at Gulfshore will rise from \$128 in 1997 to \$131 next year. At Central Hills, off-season lodging fees will go from \$16.35 to \$18 per night.

In addition, the board honored Marjean Patterson, director of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), for 40 years of service, and Okolona native Willie Thomas McPherson for 25 years service as a pastor, home missionary, director of Black Church Extension at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, and director of the Black

Church Ministries Department for California Baptists.

The Executive Committee, meeting prior to the full board meeting, considered a number of actions, some of which were reported in last week's issue of *The Baptist Record*.

The committee elected two MBCB staff members to begin work on Sept. 15:

◆ Ed Deuschle, pastor of First Church, Bay St. Louis, who will serve as evangelism consultant in the MBCB Evangelism Department, with priorities in witness training and Interfaith Witness work.

◆ Anita Malley, home services coordinator/case manager for Lakeview Shepherd Center in New Orleans, who will serve as Girls in Action and Mission Friends consultant in the Mississippi WMU Department.

The Executive Committee voted to dissolve the four-year-old Clarke College special committee upon the Aug. 26 receipt of a \$1 million from the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, which purchased the former Baptist junior college in Newton for use as a residential program for mentally challenged adults.

The Executive Committee voted to distribute the Clarke College sale proceeds to the three remaining Baptist colleges in the state. After Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton is reimbursed \$242,000 for their agreed-upon operational deficit during an ill-fated attempt to keep Clarke College open in the 1980s, the remaining \$758,000 will be divided

equally among MC, William Carey College in Hattiesburg, and Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain.

Of that remaining \$758,000, approximately \$265,000 would have gone to the MBCB for expenses incurred in maintaining and selling the property after the school closed. However, the Executive Committee agreed to make that amount a gift to Christian higher education by offsetting the MBCB expenses from available funds.

In other business, the Executive Committee approved purchase of a 1998 Ford extended cab truck for \$23,688 for Mississippi Baptist disaster relief work. The purchase will free a 1985 Chevy Suburban to be a work vehicle for Central Hills Retreat.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

Record

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Proposed 1998 Mississippi CP Budget

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION CAUSES

SBC Operating	305,251
Foundation (Merged)	0
International Mission Board	4,597,160
North American Mission Board	2,095,385
Radio-TV Commission (Merged)	0
Brotherhood (Merged)	0
Home Mission Work in Miss.	257,926
Annuity Board	69,877
SBC Seminaries	1,989,651
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	136,995
Am. Baptist Sem., Education, Historical and Stewardship Comm. (Elim/Merged)	0
Total	9,452,245

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES - MBC MATCHING PORTION

Church Annuity	720,000
Total	720,000

MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES

Baptist Children's Village	552,500
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Board of Ministerial Education	295,000
Christian Action Commission	281,078
Christian Education	4,387,305
Christian Education Capital Needs	650,000
Historical Commission	48,030
Mississippi Baptist Foundation	318,663
Miss. Baptist Health Systems	0
Total	6,532,576

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD

Missions/Church Services	
Baptist Record	569,826
Broadcast Services	209,585
Brotherhood	391,211
Business Div./Acct & Pers Services	422,031
Church Admin/Church Bldg Services	272,826
Church Music	359,895
Church/Minister Relations	286,156
Computer Information Services	264,068
Convention & Convention Committees	88,050
Discipleship & Family Ministry	511,960

Evangelism Promotion	201,755
Exec. Director's Office	332,827
Gulfshore Operations	355,304
Ministry Office	248,716
Missions Extension Assoc. Admin.	616,133
Office of Communication	273,906
Stewardship	245,681
Student Work	1,294,436
Sunday School	579,504
Woman's Missionary Union	574,925
Youth Night/Youth Weeks	52,700
Church Growth Teams	179,625
Capital Needs	
Convention Board	460,667
Student Centers	50,000
Total	8,841,787

TOTAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM BUDGET

25,546,608

Challenge Portion Percentages	
Christian Education	50%
International Missions	25%
North American Missions	10%
Mississippi Missions	15%

Students prepare for 'See You at the Pole'

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Hundreds of thousands - possibly millions - of teenagers worldwide will gather at school flagpoles once again Sept. 17 for "See You At The Pole." The annual student-led prayer effort has served both to mobilize student prayer efforts and bolster the organization of Christian clubs on campus.

See You at the Pole began in 1990 as an emphasis of the Texas Baptist Convention. More than 45,000 participated the first year, and in 1991 the effort gained the support of a broad range of evangelical organizations in the United States and other countries. It is held annually on the third Wednesday of September.

Dean Finley, a student evangelism associate for the North American Mission Board who helps coordinate the event among Southern Baptists, said pollster George Barna estimated more than 1 million participants several years ago in the U.S. Another estimate put the total at 2.5 million in 1995, with indications of continued growth last year.

Finley is asking leaders this year to file reports on a Internet-based form as soon as possible after the event through a web site sponsored by his office (www.syatp.org). Updates will be posted

on the site every two hours on Sept. 17, including both numbers and anecdotal information. The idea, Finley said, is for information to be immediately available for Wednesday night prayer meeting reports and other purposes. Last year more than 100,000 participants were reported on the NAMB site in the first year of Internet-based reporting.

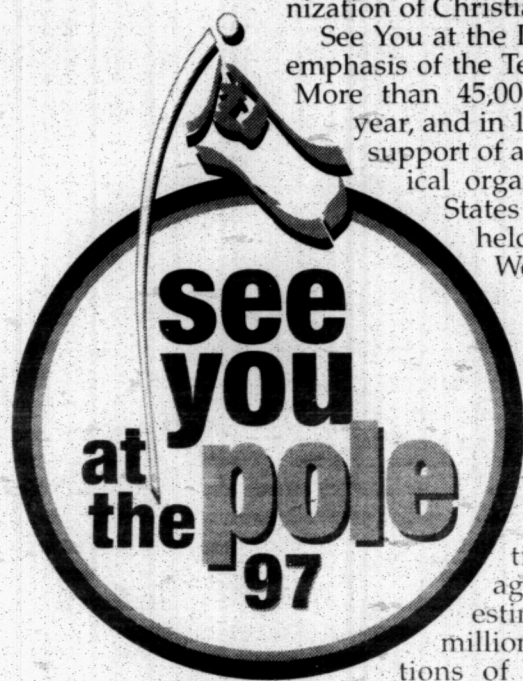
Finley said the See You at the Pole effort has served not only to mobilize efforts of young people interceding on behalf of their generation, but also to spur the growth of campus Bible clubs. NAMB offers materials and information on helping students organize M-pact clubs, essentially a service club with a Christian flare.

Even without organizational sponsorship, the simple nature of the event has

made it easy for Christian students to participate — not even knowing if anybody else will come. In some cases, reports indicate only two people met for prayer. In others, as many as 1,000 students have attended.

"And it's a place for people to make a contact," Finley said. "Many times people don't know who'll show up, and it's been interesting over the years to see people say, 'Gosh, I didn't know this many (Christian) people were here.'"

The NAMB-sponsored Internet site, at www.syatp.org, also serves as a source of information for organizing and promoting the event. Another national web site devoted to the event with a similar name, www.syatp.com, also provides information and promotional materials.



September 17, 1997

Miss. teens preparing for 'Pole'

Churches around the state are having youth rallies and other events in preparation for the 7th annual See You at the Pole national prayer event, according to Don Lum, youth consultant with the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Lum anticipates that jr. and sr. high students in record numbers will gather to pray for their classmates, teachers, and administrators at 7 a.m., on Wednesday, September 17.

In order to get an accurate measure of the effectiveness of this event, Lum is ask-

ing for someone to call his office and give the name of the school and the number of persons involved in this year's event.

The same effort is being made on the national level with a report form available on the Internet. (see article this page).

Promotion material for See You at the Pole is also available by calling (814) 447-7526.

Mississippi reports can be made by calling (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside of Jackson (800) 748-1651 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. Lum asks that reports be made as soon as possible after the prayer time.

Barna: teen spirituality high, commitment low

OXNARD, Calif. (ABP) — The spiritual beliefs of America's early teenagers closely mirror those of adults, although youth rarely talk to their parents about such matters, a Christian researcher recently reported.

George Barna reported that 88% of teens say they're Christian, slightly higher than the 84% of adults who define themselves as Christian. But responses indicate many youth are identifying more with a cultural Christianity than with the Bible.

Teens and adults also responded similarly that religious faith is very important to their lives, 82% and 87% respectively.

"In many ways, teenagers are the mirror image of adults when it comes to religious beliefs and attitudes," Barna wrote in his newsletter, the "Barna Report."

"This is particularly striking because we also discovered that teens and their parents spend little if any time discussing what they believe related to faith."

Barna said teens absorb much of their religious perspective through "spiritual osmosis," a mixture of observation, conversation, instructions, media exposure, family tradition, and peer pressure.

Meanwhile, commitment levels by those who call themselves Christians is low, Barna wrote.

Of those who call themselves Christian, only 35% said they are "absolutely committed" to the Christian faith. And about one-quarter of all teens said their faith makes a "huge difference" in how they live.

Biblical literacy was lacking among many teens polled. While 64% said the Bible is totally accurate in all of its teachings, 51% said all people will experience the same outcome after death, regardless of their spiritual beliefs.

"The theology presently embraced by teens is still in transition, but it leans heavily toward a cultural Christianity rather than a biblical Christianity," he wrote.

Two-thirds of teens believe in the God described in the Bible, but one-third believe in another notion of God, Barna wrote. Among the responses:

- ◆ 11% said God is a "state of higher consciousness."
- ◆ 9% called God the "total realization of all personal, human potential."
- ◆ 7% said there are many gods, each with its own power and authority.

Barna noted that while most teens refer to themselves as Christians, only 32% answered questions about their faith in ways that indicate they've had a "born-again" experience.

"Also, it appears that age 15 is a major time of questioning prior assumptions about core faith elements," Barna wrote.

Even those who commit to Christ earlier re-evaluate that commitment at age 15, he wrote. "It is one of the last major windows of opportunity we have to influence people with the good news about Christ."

Jewell Nelson, a Sunday School associate for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said to achieve better educated and committed teens, parents and churches should start early.

"We don't need to start with youth. We need to start with preschool," she said. "Good age-appropriate Bible teaching in the preschool and children's ministries builds a strong spiritual foundation for youth."

Children ages nine through 12 are especially open to biblical answers to spiritual questions, she said. "These are the ages when concrete thinking lessens and reasoning increases."

"If good teaching begins here, teen years are more secure, though questioning and re-evaluating can be a significant part of faith development and growth."

More 'Vessels' dates scheduled

"Vessels," a video magazine about the work of Mississippi Baptists will be shown on a number of ACTS (Odyssey channel) and other cable systems around the state during September and at other times.

If any other churches in the state have access to a cable channel, the Broadcast Services Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) will make available a 3/4-inch, S-VHS or other format for broadcast.

If you see "Vessels" on television please contact the Broadcast Services Department at P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530 or telephone (601) 968-3800; toll-free outside of Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Those churches and cable stations scheduled to run "Vessels" are as follows:

CITY	DATE	TIME	CABLE CHANNEL
ACTS of Greenville First Church, Greenville	Sept. 8	7:00 p.m.	Delta Cablevision Channel 17
	Sept. 10	11:00 a.m.	
	Sept. 12	7:00 p.m.	
First Church, New Albany	Sept. 7	8:00 a.m.	Galaxy Channel 27
	Sept. 9	7:00 p.m.	
	Sept. 10	6:00 p.m.	
	Sept. 13	10:00 a.m.	
First Church, Grenada	Sept. 9	7:00 p.m.	Bresnan Communications Channel 13
	Sept. 12	7:00 p.m.	

Texas Baptist committee releases report

DALLAS (ABP) — A Texas Baptist committee is recommending that the state convention publish its own church literature emphasizing Texas missions and Baptist distinctives.

The material could supplement or replace products of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, which the committee claims are increasingly geared and marketed toward a non-Baptist audience.

The 20-page report calls for increased emphasis on reaching the state's growing non-Christian population.

A huge population influx has turned the traditional Baptist stronghold from "the

missions base" to "a mission field," the committee reported. The unchurched population of Texas is greater than the total population in 42 of 50 states and in 143 different countries.

The committee recommends "that literature and other resources for Sunday School, Discipleship Training, missions organizations and other Bible study groups be developed as either a supplement to existing materials or a substitute for existing materials."

The full efficiency and effectiveness report will come as a recommendation at the state convention annual meeting Nov. 10-11 in Austin.

The report calls for the state convention to:

- ◆ Appoint missionaries for outreach to different cultural groups, especially in cities.

- ◆ Emphasize multicultural hirings for staffs of the state convention and agencies.

- ◆ Develop programs of theological education for lay church members and ministers unable to attend seminary.

- ◆ Establish a system to permit "lay envoys" to be trained to minister on international mission fields.

- ◆ Expand partnership missions to include not only the SBC's International and North American Mission boards but also the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Baptist World Alliance.

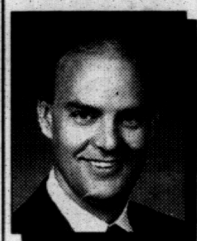
- ◆ Explore membership in the Baptist World Alliance, an organization of national Baptist bodies worldwide.

- ◆ Affirm the convention as "an autonomous body which will support mission causes in Texas, the nation and the world" that will "cooperate reciprocally with organizations and affiliations that complement its mission and its statement of purpose."

Committee chairman Darold Morgan called the report "a tremendous vote of confidence in the work and ministry of the Baptist General Convention of Texas."

"The recommendations we're making are based on the strength of the denomination, not its weaknesses," said Morgan, former president of the SBC Annuity Board, based in Dallas.

BGCT President Charles Wade said, "This document says we are not in opposition to the SBC. We want the SBC to do what it does as well as it can."



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

How do I deal with a loved one (my dad) who continues to publicly disgrace our family?

Talk with your mother about this matter, with a focus on determining whether this is a problem for the entire family or a personal issue for you. Next, call a family conference without dad and discuss this matter with other family members. The purpose of the family conference is not to exclude your father or gossip behind his back, but to provide a way for everyone to openly air their thoughts and arrive at some consensus on what must be done. Some issues that must be discussed include:

- ◆ Is your father displaying symptoms of a medical or mental problem, such as Alzheimer's Disease or dementia? Talk with his physician and any other health care professional for whom he is a patient.

- ◆ Is your father's behavior brought on by alcohol/drug abuse, or by other addictions (gambling, pornography, etc.)? If so, search for organizations and treatment options that can help him deal with his addictions.

- ◆ Is your father desperately seeking attention for some reason? He may see misbehavior as the only way to get the attention he craves.

You won't know until you and other family members spend some one-on-one time with him. Look beyond his shameful actions — and the disgrace you are feeling — to determine whether there is a real need with which you can help. Pray for your father and

see what God will reveal to you. As hard as this may be, you will find that it's difficult to be angry with someone for whom you are praying, and that will make your thinking even clearer.

I can't believe my company has promoted me to supervise the man who stole my wife. How do I deal with this fiasco?

Your human side is undoubtedly screaming for payback, but the Bible states, "... If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." (Rom. 12:20 NIV) In Bible times, destitute people would walk around town with bowls balanced on their heads and people would put burning coals from their own fires in the bowls to help the poor keep warm. What a lovely picture of how Christians are supposed to conduct themselves! Let Christ show through you. Much more will be gained if you conduct yourself as a man of Christian integrity, rather than a creature of anger and rage. It is probable that this man's iniquity will catch up with him some day, but that's up to the Lord and not you. This situation is going to test your Christianity, but you can use it to become a stronger man of God and follower of Jesus. Confide your burden to a male Christian friend, and ask him to pray with you for strength. You can perceive this as a low blow, or as a way to make your Christian witness even more powerful. This choice is yours.

SBC leaders question Texas study

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A Texas Baptist study committee's recommendations would make significant, historic changes in the partnership between the state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee, responding to the report, said, "Two of the ties that bind Southern Baptists are their commitment to the principles of autonomy and cooperative relationships. We remain firmly committed to both those principles."

"This report seems to signal a substantial departure from cooperative relationships of long duration. The report, if approved and implemented, has the potential to significantly impair those relationships, specifically in reference to home and foreign missions, literature production, and theological education."

James T. Draper Jr., president of the SBC's Baptist Sunday School Board, said he regretted "concerns about literature were not shared with (the BSSB) by the Effectiveness/Efficiency Committee (EEC). We must register our strong concern regarding contentions in the report about the quality of literature available to Southern Baptist churches in Texas."

Draper said the report does not specifically name the Sunday School Board but does suggest that the "best possible biblically based materials to meet the needs of Texas Baptists cannot be provided by a national entity. We take exception to that."

Draper said the report suggests, "without naming us," that the BSSB is increasingly focusing on a non-Baptist market.

"That is not accurate. Serving Southern Baptist churches is

our number one priority. Our conservative, biblically based materials, including their references to Southern Baptists, are increasingly appealing to non-Baptist churches because they are relevant to life needs, high in value and quality, and assist churches in making disciples better than any other resources available," Draper said in a statement to Baptist Press.

Sales of BSSB materials to Texas churches are increasing, Draper said, and "we have received strong affirmation of our materials from Southern Baptist churches throughout the state."

He said the agency is committed to meeting the resource needs of Baptist churches and individuals in Texas.

Chapman said the charge that reorganization savings did not

go to missionaries "is a contradiction of the published reports distributed at the SBC and specific written responses to inquiries from BGCT leadership last spring."

"In actuality, \$5 million of the projected \$8 million savings in the next fiscal year is in the NAMB budget for their strategic missions enterprises."

Bob Reccord, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, said his "earnest" prayer is that Texas would be careful to not take "any steps that could jeopardize the fragile but vital 'rope of sand' which characterizes and virtually defines Southern Baptist cooperative missions."

Officials at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board said they had no comment on the report.

◆ MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST STUDENT UNION ◆ SUMMER MISSIONARY TESTIMONIES

THOMAS JAMIESON
Montana — 1989
Delta State University



BSU summer and semester missions radically changed my life forever. I always thought serving God was a burden which required suffering. Even when I went to Montana I was trying to bargain with God saying I would go anywhere and do anything for three months. The summer was incredible and I saw what a joy serving our Lord Jesus could be. God didn't make any bargains and in December of that same year at Missions '90, I surrendered to go wherever, whenever, and do whatever the Lord wished.

Since then I served as a BSU semester missionary in Germany and most recently as an International Service Corps missionary to Hungary. Through BSU summer and semester missions, God began a journey in my life that is better than anything I could have planned. Praise God for BSU and the opportunities for growth and service it gives.



Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



MISSIONARY NEWS

Faith Church to organize on Sept. 7

Faith Church, Jackson, will hold an organizational meeting at 2 p.m. on Sept. 7 in the auditorium of Chastain Middle School on Northside Drive in Jackson, where the church is currently holding worship services.

Speaker will be M. R. Bradley, former director of missions for Selma, Ala. Edward Trott, retired Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil and interim pastor at Faith Church, said he expects about 50 charter members. The group has voted to give 10% of its gifts through the Cooperative Program and two percent to Metro Association.

Dennis and Janet Brotherton, missionaries to Korea, are in the States (address: 2206 W. Auburn, Bolivar, Mo. 65613). He is a native of West Plains, Mo. The former Janet Millier was born in Greenville and lived in Germany, California, and Tulsa, Okla., while growing up.

Robert and Donna Burris, missionaries to Taiwan, are in the States (address: 1103 Lexington, Irving, Texas 75061). He is a native of Dallas, Texas. The former Donna Cope was born in Newton and considers Birmingham, Ala., her hometown.

Fredrick and Deborah Davis, missionaries to Baltic Mission, are in the States (address: 1920 West India Head Dr., Tallahassee, Fla. 32301). A native of Florida, he was born in Marianna and grew up in Tallahassee. The former Deborah Rush was born in Laurel and grew up in Tallahassee, Fla.

Philip and Laura Dunaway, missionaries to Brazil, are on the field (address: Caixa Postal 7087, 71619-970 Brasilia, DF, Brazil). They are natives of Mississippi. He was born in Jackson and considers Hattiesburg his hometown. She is the former Laura Lindley of Meridian.

Rickey and Lori Funderburk, missionaries to Sierra Leone, are in Senegal for language study (address: BP 8417 - Yoff, Dakar, Senegal). He is a native of Memphis, Tenn. The former Lori Dean was born in Cleveland.

James and Brenda Hearn, missionaries to Togo, are on the field (address: BP 1353, Lome, Togo). He is a native of Corinth and she is the former Brenda Hunt of Bogalusa, La.

Thomas and Bonnie Hearon, missionaries to Brazil, are in the States (address: 1635 Plantation Blvd., Jackson, Miss. 39211). He was born in New Orleans, La., and considers Jackson his hometown. She is the former Bonnie Ernst of San Antonio, Texas.

David and Robin Johnson, missionaries to Japan, are on the field (address: 1-15-1 Momochi, Sawara-ku, Fukuoka-shi 814, Japan). He was born in East Tallahassee, Ala., and also lived in Renton, Wash., and Montgomery, Ala. She is the former Robin Parks of Columbus.

William and Cynthia Martin, missionaries to Bolivia, are in the States (address: 105 Billy Byrd Ave., Clinton, Miss. 39056). He is a native of Yazoo City and she is the former

Cynthia Hammack of Natchez.

Vickers of Jackson.

Dennis and Sherrie Meilstrup, missionaries to Argentina, are on the field (address: Diaz Velez 306, 1636 La Lucila, Buenos Aire, Argentina). He was born in South Bend, Ind., and considers Orlando, Fla., his hometown. The former Sherrie Walker was born in Meridian and considers Flora her hometown.

Joe and Teri Metts, missionaries to Dominican Republic, are in the States (address: 1611 Florence Byrum Rd., Florence, Miss. 39073). He was born in Deland, Fla., and considers Clinton his hometown. She is the former Teri

Robert and Janice Mooney, missionaries to Uganda, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 1734, Kampala, Uganda). He was born in Marvell, Ark., and considers Jackson his hometown. The former Janice Anglin was born in Bogalusa, La., and considers Talisheek, La., her hometown.

Harold and Susan Thornton, Baptist representatives to Mexico are in the States (address: 32465 Walker North, Walker, La. 70785). He was born in Tylertown and the former Susan McDaniel in Fort Riley, Kan. Both consider Kentwood, La., their hometown.

EBF protests treatment of Azerbaijani pastor

HAMBURG, Germany (ABP) — The arrest of a Baptist pastor and deacon in Azerbaijan has prompted a protest letter from a European Baptist leader to the president of the former Soviet republic.

Karl Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, protested the reported arrest of Pastor

Zaur Balaev and a deacon from Aliabad Baptist Church in a letter to Azerbaijani President Heidar Aliiev.

The church leaders reportedly were imprisoned over their ties to the Baptist church. It was the second time Baptists had been arrested in the city, a Shi'ite Muslim stronghold. In his letter, Walter called the arrest a violation of human rights.

"We can assure you that the members of Baptist churches have always been faithful citizens of the countries where they live but at the same time have insisted on religious freedom for every person," Walter wrote.

REVIVAL DATES

First, Shannon: Sept. 7-9; Sunday, 11 a.m. service followed by lunch, and 7 p.m. nightly; Forrest Sheffield, Tupelo, evangelist; Dudley Brasher, Starkville, music; Mark Cayson, pastor.

Bogue Chitto (Lincoln): Sept. 7-11; 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. worship, covered dish lunch, and 7 p.m. each night; Jim Hill and family, Laurel, preaching and singing; Bill Hudson, pastor.

Antioch, Union: Sept. 7-12; 7 nightly; Clark Stewart, Crystal Springs, evangelist; Wayne Bishop, Antioch Church, music; James Young, pastor.

Longview, Starkville: Sept. 5-7; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on the grounds, and 1:30 p.m. service; Kenneth Walter, Picayune, evangelist;

Steve and Becky Carver, Starkville, music; Donald I. Pouns, pastor.

Faith (Metro): Sept. 7-10; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 nightly; Steve Wilson, Brandon, evangelist; Marshall Killcrease, pastor.

Camp Ground, Water Valley: Sept. 7-10; Larry Marlin, Dalton, Ga., evangelist; Ray Nicholas, music; Troy Hurdle, pastor.

Mashulaville, Macon: Sept.

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NO DOWN PAYMENT - 100% FINANCING
SAVE NOW
• ROOFING
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• CARPORT
as low as **\$50** Per Mo. W.A.C.
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EXCITING CAREER IN CHRISTIAN RETAILING

Excellent salary and benefits package available. Qualifications must include: four-year college degree or comparable business management experience, relocation required, outstanding leadership, computer skills, strong vision for the future, and active role in a Southern Baptist church

Send resume to:
RETAIL STORE OPERATIONS
MANAGER TRAINING SEARCH
127 NINTH AVENUE, NORTH
MSN 165
NASHVILLE, TN 37234-0165
OR FAX TO (615) 251-3622

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Southern Baptist Convention

1997 Mid-South Pastors' Conference "Preaching and the Healthy Church"

with

Dr. Jerry Vines

September 16-17, 1997

at



**The
Leavell
CENTER**
for Evangelism
& Church Growth

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Cost: \$29.00 per person. Please pay upon arrival.

Register Now:

BY FAX - (504) 286-3635 - Fax your name, address, phone number, and specify "Dr. Vines". (Available 24 hours)

BY PHONE - (800) 662-8701 ext. 3320 (8 a.m. - 5 p.m. - Monday - Friday)

BY MAIL - Mail name, address, and phone number to: 3939 Gentilly Boulevard New Orleans, LA 70126-4858.

Are your seniors tired of crawling over the HUMP? The solution is a 15-passenger van with an aisle, raised roof & electric step.
Call Tri-State Van & Bus Today! 1-800-330-3622
BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS!

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

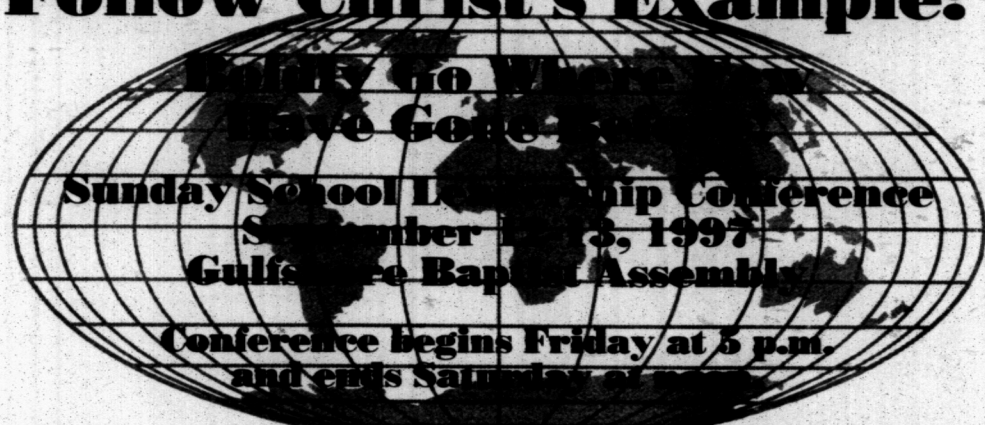
HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

September 4, 1997

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

Follow Christ's Example:



Come and explore what it truly means to follow Christ's example. This is a great conference for new and experienced workers. Guides for the journey will be provided for workers of all age groups. No child care provided.

For housing information or reservations contact Gulfshore Baptist Assembly at 601-452-7261.

Sponsored by the Sunday School Department, MBCB

STATE HANDBELL LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Friday, September 12
9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

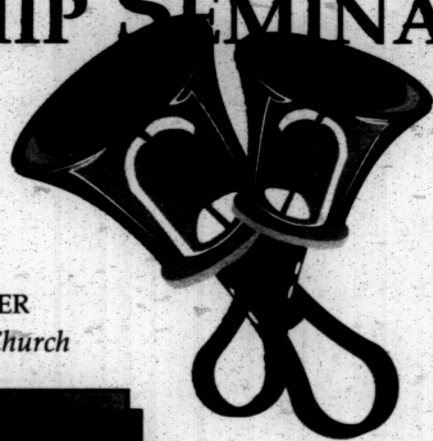
Clinicians:



KARL ZINSMEISTER
First Presbyterian Church
Greenwood



CAROL JOY SPARKMAN
Director of Handbells
Mississippi College, Clinton



Classes offered:

- Basic Handbells
- Rhythm and Bells
- Progressive and Advanced Handbell Techniques
- New Music for Bells (Reading Sessions)

Registration fee of \$20 per person includes lunch and a handbell music packet of the 1998 festival numbers.

Mail to the Church Music Department, P O Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.

Fall Festival of Marriage

September 19-21, 1997

Hotel, Jackson (formerly
Call 1-800-254-2022

Panola County Marriages

December 14 & 15, 1997

East Heights BC, Sardis, with Glenn Shores
Call 601/563-7439

Lee County Marriages

December 5 & 6, 1997

East Heights BC, Tupelo
Call Mike Hatfield 601/842-4947



Sponsored by the Department of
Marriage and Family Ministry, MBCB

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Call NOW and register!!!
1-800-585-4721

Come, Go With Me, Martha



Women's Celebration Retreat

October 10-11, 1997
Camp Lake Stevens
Oxford, Miss.

Enjoy an overnight retreat from Friday night till Saturday morning to draw away from everyday tasks and to rest in the Lord. You will have a great time of fun, friendship, and spiritual renewal with other Christian women from Mississippi.

PROGRAM PERSONALITIES

Bible Study leader: Paula Smith, missionary to Uruguay

Musician: Melissa Bryant, Huntsville, Ala.

Theme Interpretation: Shelia Stanford, Clinton, Miss.

COST:

\$25 (includes lodging, 3 meals)

\$19 (meals only)

\$7 (no meals or lodging)

AFTER OCTOBER 3, 1997:

\$35 (lodging, 3 meals)

\$28 (meals only)

\$12 (no meals or lodging)

All fees received after October 3 are non-refundable but are transferable.

For further information and a registration form, contact the
Woman's Missionary Union at
1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 in Jackson.



Attention Lads,
Crusader, &
Challengers

Come, hang out with
the guys at...

R.A. Day

When: Saturday, October 18, 2-8 p.m.

Where: Mississippi College

Who: All boys grades 1-12
and their leaders

Missionary speaker

Music, Testimonies

Meet the football players and cheerleaders

Football game:
Mississippi College vs. Austin College

\$4 per person

(includes ball game and limited supplemental insurance)

BRING YOUR OWN SACK LUNCH AND DRINK.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 13

Sponsored by the Brotherhood Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

26th Annual

CHURCH MEDIA LIBRARY CONFERENCE

October 17-18, 1997

First Baptist Church, Clinton, Miss.

MINISTRY



2000

CONFERENCE LEADERS:

BETH ANDREWS, PRESIDENT
State CML Convention, Forth Worth, Tex.

PAT BROWN, CONSULTANT
Church Media Program, BSSB, Nashville, Tenn.

SANDRA FITTS, SPECIAL WORKER
Church Media Program, BSSB, Nashville, Tenn.

BARBARA FREESE, LEAD CONSULTANT
Church Media Program, Nashville, Tenn.

STEVE GATELEY, TECHNICAL CONSULTANT
Church Media Program, BSSB, Nashville, Tenn.

MARK LOTT, YOUTH CONSULTANT
Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, Jackson, Miss.

Dinner speaker will be **Ernest Herndon**, author of the "Eric Sterling: Secret Agent" series for children published by Zondervan Publishing House. He is a native of Memphis, Tenn., who has worked as a reporter for the McComb, Miss., *Enterprise-Journal* newspaper since 1979, free-lancing on the side. He is currently the religion editor for the *Enterprise-Journal*.

Two other special guests will be **Mancil Ezell**, director of Christian Schools and Media Services Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn., and **George Williams**, representative from Broadman-Holman Publishing Company.

COURSES TO CHOOSE FROM:

ACCESSORIZING YOUR MEDIA LIBRARY
BASIC ADMINISTRATION OF A CHURCH MEDIA LIBRARY
BUILDING A HEALTHY COLLECTION!
CHOOSING AND USING SUBJECT HEADINGS
CHURCH MEDIA LIBRARY MINISTRY
COLLECTING AND PRESERVING CHURCH HISTORICAL MATERIALS
CREATING CALL NUMBERS
CREATING PROMOTION THAT COMMUNICATES
MLS LAB
INTRODUCTION TO MSL: WHAT? WHY? HOW?
ORGANIZING AND OPERATING A CML (ADVANCED)
PREPARING AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA FOR CIRCULATION
PREPARING PRINT MEDIA FOR CIRCULATION
PROMOTION: DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL THEME
PROMOTION PLANNING THAT WORKS
WHAT LIBRARIANS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TODAY'S YOUTH
WHAT TODAY'S YOUTH NEED
WINNING WITNESSING WITH MEDIA
YOUTH AND SALVATION

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 7, 1997

For further information and a registration form, contact the Broadcast Services Department at 968-3800 or 800/748-1651.

YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE • CLINTON
DECEMBER 29-30, 1997



SPEAKER
Ike Reighard

WORSHIP MUSIC
Reggie & Ladye Love Smith



VENTRILOQUIST
Dennis Lee &
The Nana
Puddin' Bunch

NEWSONG
IN CONCERT • Monday • 7:45 p.m.

Registration begins noon 29th • Conference concludes 3 p.m. 30th

Ask your youth minister for more details or contact the Evangelism Department,
MBCB at 1-800-748-1651.

1997 Youth Ministers' Conference

October 20-22, 1997

Lake Tiak O'Khata

Louisville, Miss.

DEVOTIONALS
Jeffrey Clark, pastor
FBC, Hattiesburg

SESSIONS FOR WIVES
Dottie Hudson, family counselor
FBC, Jackson

MUSIC
David Parker, professional musician
DP Ministries, Carrollton, Tex.

GENERAL SESSIONS
Allen Jackson, assistant
professor of youth education,
New Orleans Baptist
Theological Seminary

GENERAL SESSIONS
Richard Ross, consultant for
youth ministry
Baptist Sunday School Board,
Nashville

For further information and a reservation form, contact the
Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department at
1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 in Jackson.

For reservations call or write Lake Tiak O'Khata, P.O. Box 160,
Louisville, MS 39339, (toll-free 1-888-845-6151).

Who Am I...



Through My
Father's Eyes

Women's Enrichment Ministries Awareness Conference

Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson

October 24-25, 1997

Enjoy an overnight retreat of spiritual refreshment as you learn
about ministering to women in your church and
equipping them for service. Learn about new ministries
God is doing, led by national and state leaders in
Women's Ministries

Cost: \$17
(includes lunch, program
materials, and insurance)

After October 3, 1997: \$25
All fees received after
Oct. 3 are non-refundable
but are transferable.

For more information and a registration form, contact
Edna M. Ellison, WMU at 800/748-1651 or 601/968-3800.

EQUIPPING VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINS IN CARING

SEPTEMBER 26, 1997

9:30 A.M. — 3:00 P.M.

The Women's Center, Mississippi Baptist Medical Center
1405 North State Street, Jackson

A training opportunity for all volunteers in every area

CONFERENCE

Theology of Compassion—
The Model of Jesus

Theology Themes Behind Crisis Ministry

Caring In Crisis Experiences

Caring in Loss and Grief

The Ministry of Listening

Verbatim: Experiencing Caring

LEADER:

Chaplain Barbara Kimbrel

Chaplain Linda McComb

Dr. Barry Click and Scottie Blane

Dr. Stan Rushing

Marty Harper

Chaplain Al Carden

Other facilitators include Dr. Paul Stephenson and Dr. Jack Follis of
Mississippi Baptist Medical Center; and Dr. Richard Brogan of Missions
Extension Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

REGISTRATION FORM

EQUIPPING VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINS IN CARING

SEPTEMBER 26, 1997

Registration fee of \$5 per person enclosed (includes lunch and materials)

Name	Phone
Address	City State Zip

Mail to: Mississippi Baptist Medical Center
Chaplain Paul Stephenson
1225 North State Street
Jackson MS 39202-2002

Please register by
SEPTEMBER 19, 1997

For more information, call MBMC
at 601/968-5146.

Pray this day for...

September 5 – 18, 1997

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

Prayer Is A Vital Spiritual Discipline

Prayer is both one of the simplest and one of the most complicated spiritual disciplines. It is a child's talking with his or her Father. Prayer is the Christian's response to a command from God and to an invitation to be with Him.

For the Season of Prayer for State Missions (WMU)

For Brotherhood Leadership Week (BRO)

Missionaries Tom & Linda Law ask us to pray for outreach to youth in Asuncion, Paraguay. They write: "With over 50% of the population under the age of 21, it is imperative that we touch this generation with the gospel if we are ever going to make a difference."

Several people attending the Jurong East Mandarin congregation, Singapore, are close to becoming Christians. Ask God to give them the grace to take this step of faith and to become vibrant witnesses before their non-Christian friends.

For the 6.6 million Banyumasan-Javanese people living in the southwestern part of the province of Centra Java, Indonesia, to have the opportunity to hear the gospel in their own language and cultural context.

Baptist representatives Randy & Robin Covington in Russia ask for prayer for the new partnership with the Alaska Baptist Convention and the Russian Far East as it enters the initial phase.

In June, the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary celebrated its 42nd graduation exercise with 21 graduates receiving degrees. Pray for these graduates, as many of them will pastor churches in Taiwan that have been without leadership.

Southern Baptist mission work in Brazil is undergoing a major restructuring. Pray that the new structure will allow our missionaries to be even more effective in spreading the gospel throughout that vast country.

For "See You At the Pole" (EVANG)
For the King of Thailand, Bhumibol Adulyadej, that he may be acquainted with the One True God. Thank God for His Spirit's working in the life of the King and his family.

A young woman from a tribe that is 97% Muslim has been saved and baptized in a country near Indonesia. Pray that her family will not cast her off and that her testimony will change their understanding of what following Christ means.

For New Staff Day and Director of Missions Update; Baptist Building (MBCB Executive Office & MEAA)

For Church and Associational WMU Leadership Training; Camp Garaywa (WMU)
For Baptist personnel who plan to re-enter Cambodia some time in August. They were evacuated following the July coup attempt.

For State Handbell Seminar; FBC, Clinton (CM)
For Sunday School Leadership Conference; Gulfshore Assembly (SS)

Give thanks for the 21 high school students who attended the summer English camp in Macau and the 3 BSU workers who related to the students and shared their faith. Pray for missionaries Brad & Becky Dace, as they have follow-up activities with these students.

For missionary Bob Blevins as he develops Sunday School literature in the primary languages of Namibia. Ask God to help the doctors diagnose some health problems that Bob's wife, Oakie, has been having.

OCTOBER

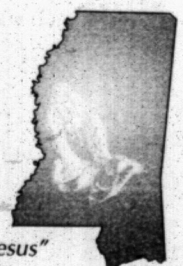
- 4-90 MR. MICAH S. McCALL, P O Box 5864, Tanga, TANZANIA
Parents: Dennis F. & Margaret, Agriculture
- 4-90 MISS ANN MARIE PEVEY, P O Box 9414, Dar es Salaam, TANZANIA
Parents: Frank D., Jr., & Jerry Anne H., Mission Administration
- 5-86 MISS JESSICA L. BAKER, 21 Dondanville Rd., #6, St. Augustine, FL 32084
Parents: Kenneth & A. Lynn, Dentistry; SERVE IN IVORY COAST
- 8-90 MISS MELISSA K. SHEARER, Apartado 2307, Arcquipa, PERU
Parents: Kevin D. & Pam, General Evangelism
- 13-85 MISS ANGELA JOY STAMPS, Apartado 2340, Managua, NICARAGUA
Parents: Keith & Penny Stamps, General Evangelism
- 14-83 MISS VICTORIA L. HARRISON, Apartado 373, San Pedro Sula, HONDURAS
Parents: C. Frank, III & Phoebe K., Youth Evangelism
- 15-83 MISS TRESSA L. PRESLEY, 311 Crickett Rd., Meridian, MS 39305-9789
Parents: Johnny D. & A. Beth, Religious Education; SERVE IN BRAZIL
- 16-77 MISS REBEKAH E. LAY, P O Box 4757, Clinton, MS 39058
Parents: W. Franklin & Margaret C., Pastoral Evangelism; SERVE IN COSTA RICA
- 19-95 MISS MELODY BAILEY, Apartado 22, 099901, Quetzaltenango, GUATEMALA, C.A.
Parents: Alvin & Elizabeth, Church Program Promo
- 27-83 MISS HANNAH M. GRAY, R. Ruy Pinto Bandiera 1112, 29090-130 Victoria, ES, BRAZIL
Parents: Tony L. & Karen B., Music Promotion
- 28-88 MISS CHELSEA L. FUNDERBURK, BP 8417-Yoff, Dekar, SENEG
Parents: Rickey F. & Lori D., Mission Administration
- 30-91 MISS VIRGINIA HUTCHINSON, CP 801, Bissau, Guinea Bissau, WEST AFRICA
Parents: Michael & Lynn, Church Planters
- 31-80 MISS GINNY R. THOMAS, Dorm Sonnenhof, Kanderstrasse 8, D-79429 Marzell, GERMANY
Parents: Robert L. & Beverly B., Hospital Administration



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October 4, 1997



"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"

HOUSE TOPS.

Wilkinson departing for Oklahoma home

By Tim Nicholas
MBCB Communications Director

Keith Wilkinson made a reputation for himself as a futurist during his 14 years as Sunday School Department director at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

That means he studies the times and tries to predict trends in church work so plans can be made to effectively reach people for Jesus Christ.

Wilkinson, who will return this week to his home state as Sunday School director/discipleship and adult ministry specialist for the Oklahoma Baptist Convention, looks at events and their consequences.

For instance, he says Baptists have a generation of Baby Boomers who grew up without doctrinal training. "Now as adults, they are searching for theological

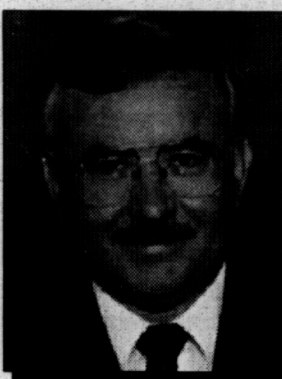
understandings in terms of their own experience."

Wilkinson says that as a result, "my prediction is that we will have to rethink our educational approaches in terms of a more holistic approach. The educational ministry of the church is what's at stake."

What Wilkinson says he has enjoyed in Mississippi Sunday School work is the opportunity to be creative — to try new relationships with

church and associational leaders — and the "tremendous staff of special workers we call on to lead conferences."

One special memory, summed up in a statistic quoted by Wilkinson, is, "I figured up the other day that well over two million kids have gone through



Wilkinson

Vacation Bible School" during his watch.

Wilkinson's wife Barbara writes Girls in Action and children's Sunday School curriculum.

Wilkinson can be contacted at the Oklahoma Baptist General Convention, 3800 N. May Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73112-6506.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

DeAnne Terrell of Birmingham, Ala., has been named director of student counseling and testing at New Orleans Seminary. She previously was a psychologist at the Federal Correctional Institute in Yazoo City. The Office of Counseling and Testing administers tests for incoming and exiting students, and offers counseling services available to the entire seminary family at no cost. Terrell received her education at Samford University, Birmingham; Georgia State University; and the University of Southern Mississippi. Her husband Jeff Terrell is the new assistant pro-

fessor of psychology and counseling, occupying the Baptist Community Ministries Chair of Pastoral Care and Counseling.

J. N. (Norville) Holloway, 87, died of heart failure Aug. 6 at the Baptist Medical Center, Jackson. Services were held Aug. 8 at Westbrook Chapel, Louisville, with burial in the Murphy Creek Cemetery. Educated at Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary, Holloway pastored 21 Mississippi churches in over 50 years of ministry. He also served as director of missions at both Marion and Choctaw

associations. Holloway is survived by his wife Leema of Louisville; son David; and grandsons Lan and Brandon of Clinton.



Becker Church, Monroe Association, recently ordained **Terry Edwards** (left, wife Pat) to the ministry and licensed **Rob Westbrook**

(right, wife Teresa) and **Chris Colburn** (not pictured). Edwards is a student at New Orleans Seminary. Westbrook plans to enroll in New Orleans Seminary in January, 1998.

Colburn is also planning to attend seminary in the near future.

REVIVAL RESULTS

Edgefield, McCool: July 13-18; **Malcom Davis**, Louisville, evangelist; **Kenny Tanksley** and **Karen Hunt**, music; four professions of faith; **Mart Bell**, pastor.

HOMECOMINGS

Alexander Memorial, James Crossing: Sept. 14; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; and noon meal; **R. B. McNeer**, former pastor, guest speaker.

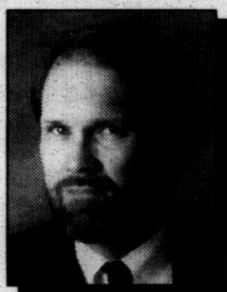
Camp Ground, Water Valley: Sept. 21; **Larry Pass**, guest speaker; **Troy Hurdle**, pastor.

Bartahatchie (Monroe): Sept. 21; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal; and 1 p.m. singing; **New Revivers, Columbus**, guest singers; **Mike Adcock**, pastor.

Tillatoba, Tillatoba: Sept. 28; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; **J. C. Mitchell**, former pastor, guest speaker.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Lewis Oswalt, coordinator of church music studies at Mississippi College, is book review editor for the first 24 issues of *Church Musician Today*, a new monthly magazine produced by the Music Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville. Oswalt also serves as a member of the Advisory Board for the periodical.



Oswalt

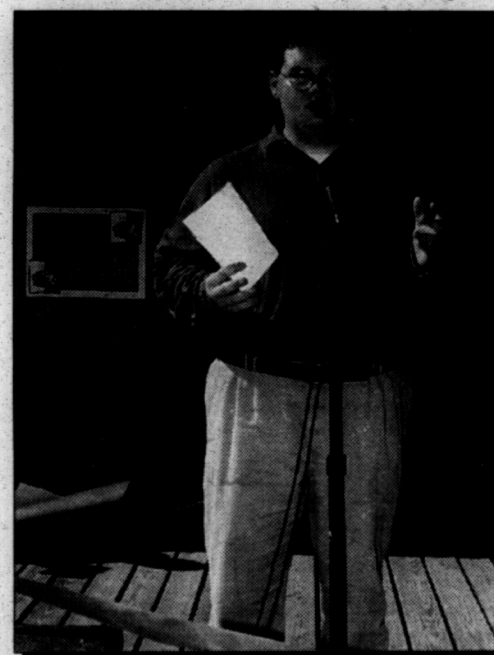
Mississippi College (MC) is listed in the top 25% of regional universities of the South in the current U.S. News & World Report's 1998 edition of "America's Best Colleges" issue. The issue ranks colleges and universities after consider-

ing a number of factors including academic reputation, freshmen retention rate, graduation rate, student/faculty ratio, alumni giving rate and class sizes. Specifically, MC was listed as a regional university — South — first tier in the recently published edition.

The Center for Creative Scholars at William Carey College will host the Teacher Exchange, an innovative program designed for teachers of gifted children on Sept. 5 from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. on campus. The registration fee is \$20. For reservations and information contact **Trudi Abel** at (601) 582-6191.

Brian Lucas, William Carey College student government association president, dedicated the new coffee house, **Common Grounds**, at grand opening ceremonies held recently on the Hattiesburg campus. Lucas, of Petal,

worked with last year's president **Chase Moore** of Meridian and student activities director, **Merryl Taylor**, to see the coffee house through to fruition. The times for **Common Grounds** are 9 a.m. until 11:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.



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Dobson, Focus join call for Disney boycott

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (BP).— The Disney boycott broadened Aug. 27 when Focus on the Family's James Dobson announced his support of the protest of Disney's moral direction.

"It has become clear that the Disney organization has utter disdain for those who hold traditional moral principles and conservative family values. Year after year, its leaders have insulted a large segment of the population by producing films, television and music that contradict cherished beliefs. For this reason, Focus on the Family now vigorously supports a boycott against anything that bears the Disney name and recommends that families, especially those of the Christian faith, no longer trust or patronize their products and programming," Dobson said.

Word of support for the

Disney boycott has been relayed by fax from Alexander Firisiuk, vice president of the Euro-Asian Federation of Baptist Unions and president of the Belarus Baptist Union in the former Soviet republic. Firisiuk wrote: "With special gratitude to our Lord we have heard (sic) about your decision (sic) in Dallas on July 18 to boycott the Walt Disney Co. and (its) anti-Christian and anti-family direction. For the Baptists of the former USSR countries who constantly continue to stay in a spiritual struggle for loyalty to God and Scripture, this decision (sic) became an enspiration (sic) and once again improve (sic) that there are many Baptists in the world who stay on the principals (sic) of the Scripture."

In a survey of 407 adults in Alabama by Southern Opinion Research in Tuscaloosa from

Aug. 5-9, roughly 33% said they agree with the SBC's Disney boycott; 57% said they disagree; and 10% registered no opinion. Among respondents

identifying themselves as Baptists, 40% agreed with the boycott; 52% disagreed; and 8% had no opinion, Southern Opinion Research reported.

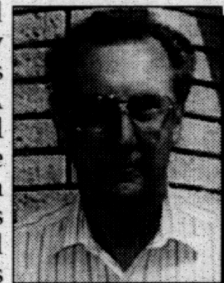
STAFF CHANGES

First Church, Winona, has called **T. R. Darsey** as minister of music and education effective Aug. 1. A native of Meridian, Darsey received his education at Clarke College and Mississippi College. His previous place of service was State Boulevard Church, Meridian.

Joe Epting has resigned as pastor of Randolph Church, Pontotoc County, effective Aug. 31. He is available for supply, interim pastor, or bivocational pastor. Epting can be reached at 719 Monticello St.,

New Albany, MS 38652 or phone (601) 534-1099.

Friendship Brookhaven, has called **Jimmy Houston** as pastor. A reception will be held at the church in honor of its newly called pastor and his wife Joyce, Sept. 7, 3-5 p.m.



Houston

VBS results

Neshoba, Union: youth 7th grades and up; 62 youth enrolled with average attendance of 42; five saved; 83 total enrolled adults and youth, Johnny Collins, pastor.

Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson, will celebrate its 90th anniversary on Oct. 19. Bruce Cappleman is pastor.

New Salem Church, Caledonia, will host a gospel singing featuring The Pleasant Valley Quartet, 7 p.m., Sept. 13.

First Church, Columbus, will celebrate its 165th anniversary from Sept. 28-Oct. 19. Joe McKeever, pastor from 1974 to 1986, will be the guest speaker during the morning worship services on Homecoming Sunday, Oct. 19.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Twenty-two men from George and Greene Association traveled to Vernonia, Oregon, in June to rebuild First Church of Vernonia which was destroyed by flooding last year. Pictured from left, front row, are Jerry Rawls, Jack Brewer, Joe Dickerson, Glen Strahan, Les Dale, Deland Miller, John W. Henry; back row, Hubert Goff, Dotson Hembree, Frank Mowdy, Buddy Keel, Jimmy Walley, Willie Zehner, and Billy Dickson. M. V. McLendon, Michael McLendon, Martin McLendon, Mike Cochran, Sterling Dickson, Allan Brown, Raymond Smith, and Malcomb Eubanks, not pictured.

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 50 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Cash with order except on contract advertising. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads. Only written ads accepted.

WANTED: Part-time Youth Director. Send resumes to: Trinity Baptist Church, 595 Center Avenue, Philadelphia, MS 39350.

ACCEPTING RESUMES: Full-time conservative Youth/Children's Minister. Send to: PO Box 753, Waldron, AR 72958.

TOOMSUBA BAPTIST CHURCH seeks part-time Music Director. Call (601) 632-1157 or send inquiries to: PO Box 269, Toomsaba, MS 39364.

SEEKING RESUMES, Minister of Music/Youth. First Baptist Church, Box 1568, Leesville, Louisiana 71496.

YOUTH OUTINGS? Paintball-games! Other functions! Curry Creek Outdoors. (601) 722-9000.

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SAXOPHONE LESSONS: Beginners, Intermediates. \$8 per half hour; \$12 per hour. Metro Jackson Area. Call (601) 924-2096 for information.

FOR SALE: 16 Light Oak Finish Pews & 3 Light Oak Finish Choir Pews with yellow/gold built-in cushions. 1 Pulpit, 1 Communion Table w/ glass cover, 2 Pulpit Chairs w/ matching built-in cushions. Pews: \$100 each; Pulpit Furniture: \$600; Total \$2500. For more information, Contact Rev. Benny Still at (601) 847-0910 or write Poplar Springs Baptist Church, 362 Poplar Springs Road, Mendenhall, MS 39114.

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Northeast Church, Marion, recently held a revival with five ministers from Union present. From left are Frank Lay, missionary to Costa Rica; Bill Webb, retired pastor from Midway, Meridian; W. F. (Pete) Evans, pastor; Ron Taylor, minister of music at First Church, Union; and Gordon Sansing, pastor of Center Ridge, Kemper County.



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SURPRISES NEVER CEASE

Editor:

I never cease to be surprised by the actions of our SBC leadership — disturbed but not surprised! Let me give two contrasting examples that should outrage every Southern Baptist.

The controversial, radical TV preacher Jerry Falwell, now occupies the bottom three floors of the six story Baptist building, purchased with Lottie Moon offering, in Seoul, Korea. This is the same Jerry Falwell that is under investigation for violating tax codes banning churches from political campaigning. He is not even a Southern Baptist!

On the other hand, I read recently where Dr. Jon Stubblefield, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Shreveport, La., could no longer teach Greek in the Seminary's Shreveport extension center, even for free, because he had spoken to a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meeting. Like Dr. Stubblefield's church, which gave \$65,000 to the Lottie Moon offering last year, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship members and churches are Southern Baptists who continue to give to the Cooperative Program.

I wish someone would explain this to me. What would Jesus do?

Robbie P. Triggs
Madison

GET BACK TO CHRIST

Editor:

It breaks my heart to read portions of today's "Record." I remember when it used to echo with glorious testimonies of the power of God at work in the

hearts of his people. It seems that now all of our attention is on bickering, complaining, backbiting, accusing, who's right and who's wrong.

Everyone has a right to an opinion; but, can you imagine what non-Christians must think when they read a copy of the "Record"? What do they see? They see fussin', fightin', arguin', and complainin' — just like in any other publication they read. God warns about "...debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, and tumults" (2 Cor. 12:20). He says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). When I read some of the letters that people have written concerning Disney, NAMB salaries, SBC salaries, etc., I don't see the love and grace that God is talking about. As Christian people, called to be Christ-like, I don't see love "Between the lines;" I see bitterness, envy, and anger.

Brother, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let's look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (See Hebrews 12:1-2). Let's repent, ask forgiveness, serve and love God with all our hearts — that others might see the love of Christ in us. Amen.

Brian A. Williamson, pastor
Corinth Church, Purvis

'AMEN' TO JONES

Editor:

I would like to say a big "Amen" to "Boycott makes

sense" by Ed Jones, and the letter to the editor, "Stop The Whining" by Steve Lammons, (The Baptist Record Aug. 21.)

Velma A. Windham
Taylorsville

BSU BLESSINGS

Editor:

The Baptist Record has really been a timely news source during the year we have been serving as Interim Director here at Baptist Village. We conclude our assignment at the end of August, so you may discontinue sending it. Thanks for that kind service to overseas missionaries with Mississippi connections. We continue to have strong ties to the state and the people.

Allow us to also thank Mississippi Baptists for sending two great BSU team members to help us with our camps this summer. Albert White of Ole Miss and Will Odom of Northwest Community College served with distinction. What a joy to work with them! Will worked as a life guard and did a great job. Al served as a camp counselor...and I can still see him walking around the campus with an Arab kid on his shoulder! One day we had a water main to break. I was digging frantically, only to look to my right to see Al digging along side me. What a blessing those guys were!

Cape and Barbara Caperton
Central Sharon, Israel

DISTURBING MATTERS

Editor:

There are some very disturbing things happening within our Southern Baptist organization. I cannot believe that supposedly intelligent men are catering to some of the ideas that are being born.

First of all, the apology made to the black community concerning slavery of their forefathers. My forefathers never owned any person. They were all just as poor as any black

with the exception they had no white landowner to support them. They either worked themselves to death to make an existence doing whatever they could find to make an honest living or they went hungry.

There were no welfare programs and no food stamps. Most white Americans grew up like that. There were some that had money, but these were very few.

If an apology is owed to black America, then it seems very fitting that the wealthy of today owe white America, whose forefathers were poor, an apology also.

I personally owe no one anything except my creditors and to God I owe everything. How can a group of people at a convention make such a commitment to one group of people in behalf of millions of other people. It is sickening to watch some of our white leaders in action.

I have many black friends that I think very highly of but they do not expect me to kiss their boots, just be their friend on equal basis according to the Scriptures.

Charles Rodgers
Crystal Springs

SEEKING PASTOR

Editor:

Trinity Baptist Church, a congregation of about 120 people located in Metterich, Germany which is near Bitburg, Germany, is in need of a pastor. The congregation is mainly people connected with the American military. Our church is affiliated with European Baptist Convention (English Language) and is founded on the principles and doctrines of the Southern Baptist Convention.

If God is leading you to pastor in a mission setting, please contact: Jim McGinnis, PSC 9 Box 4666, APO AE 09123. E-mail: mcginnij@SilynNet.de or trinity@silyn.net.

Jim McGinnis
Chairman, Pastor Search Committee



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE

God and his good creation

Genesis 1:1-23

By Jason Bird

Recent space exploration to Mars has reignited the debate among scientists concerning the origin of life in the universe. In light of ever-changing theories in the scientific community, it is important for the believer to know God's record of the beginning of life. The Genesis account instructs that life was no accident; each act of creation occurred in an orderly manner and for a divine purpose.

In The Beginning (1:1-2). There was a time when there was nothing but God. This concept is difficult for man's finite mind to comprehend. The Bible does not explain the existence

of God. Instead, it assumes his eternal existence. The account in Genesis is not meant to be a history of God, but a record of his creative power. After making the general statement that the heavens and earth were a result of the creative act of God, the writer moves into the specifics of the beginning of life.

God Said (1:3-31). Those who say that life is the result of an impersonal force miss the meaning and power of God's presence in creation. He was personally involved in every aspect of bringing forth life. Each part of creation was brought into being simply by



Bird

the word of God. It was all a part of his purpose and plan. He supervised each aspect closely, as indicated by the phrases, "God said," "God called," and "God saw." There was nothing impersonal or unsupervised about the beginning of life!

There was a divine order to the creation, moving from basic to complex. First, God brought forth a supernatural light to dispel the darkness. From that point, God spoke and the sky was created, dry ground appeared, vegetation was placed on the earth, the sun, moon, and stars were placed in their proper position, birds and fish filled the sky and water respectively, animals were made to roam the earth and, finally, God placed man on the earth to oversee it all.

The scientific method has

never proven any theory that stands in contradiction to God's Word concerning the origin of life. The diversity of life experienced on this planet did not come from slow, successive changes in plants and animals. Each part of the creation was fashioned, "after their kind," meaning they were distinct from the beginning and not a part of a continuum, as evolutionists say. Instead, life burst forth in a great explosion at the command of God.

And God Rested (2:1-3). God didn't rest because he was tired or out of ideas. When he surveyed all that he had made, God saw that it was very good. The day of rest was a celebration of the completion of his work. In the fast-paced society in which we live, these verses should be a reminder of the importance of resting and focusing on God's plan and purpose in worship.

The Genesis account of creation is not just ancient history. It has important implications for all mankind today. The majesty of creation should inspire all men to bow in praise of such a mighty God who could bring all this to pass. That God created us also gives meaning and purpose to life. Mankind is not an accident of nature. Instead, his life was divinely ordained by God. This gives value to life as well. When we recognize that God is the Creator of all things, we also recognize that he has the sovereign right to govern his creation. Right and wrong is not determined by the whims of modern man, but by the eternal God who gave life in the first place. God's claim on life is based in the bedrock truth, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

Bird is pastor, 15th Avenue Church, Meridian.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Where is God?

Isaiah 44:21-45:8

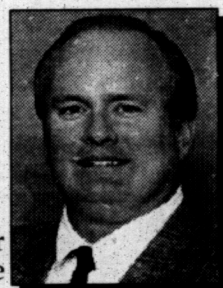
By Wayne VanHorn

Have you ever felt lonely, isolated or depressed? Such feelings are a natural part of the human experience. During times of isolation we tend to feel cut off from the good things of life. Often we have to deal with the reality that our negative circumstances are the result of our own folly and poor choices. Such was the mind set of God's people cut off from their home land, isolated in distant Babylon, and pessimistic about any possibility of bright tomorrow's. The worst aspect of their negative circumstances was the reality that their exile was the result of

rebellion against their covenant with the Lord. Was it really over? No! God was not done with his people.

The Babylonian Exile (586 B.C. to 538 B.C.) was God's way of teaching his people the humility necessary to be fit servants for him. Now they were ready.

Where Doubt Is (44:24). After years of exile and isolation, the doubt felt by the people is understandable. God dealt with this doubt directly. The people could have hope, not because of who they were, but because of who God is. The secret to accomplishing anything for the Lord is to stay focused on who he is. Isaiah 44:24 enumerates several



VanHorn

aspects of God's being. The prophet used five participles (verbs of duration) to emphasize God's past, present, and future activity. Notice how God redeems us. He can redeem us because he formed us. Notice also that he made all things, stretching out the heavens and spreading out the earth. The use of participles indicates that he not only had power in the past, but he also has power in the present. This was good news for depressed people. Their God had not forgotten them. He was about to use his unique power to change their situation for the better.

Where Deceit Is (44:25). Isaiah 44:25 mentions boasters, diviners, and wise men. These three groups could all be classified as false human counselors. The basic intent of the verse is to warn against listening to con-

ventional wisdom when analyzing whether God's people will return to their home land. The circumstances are irrelevant. The "powers that be" (the Babylonians) are inconsequential. When God decided to bring his people home, the act was as good as done. The people had only to await his timing.

Where Hope Is (44:26). True hope is the only cure for depression. True hope comes only from the Lord! God's people needed to know that he personally guaranteed their restoration. The Lord sent the word of restoration through his servant, Isaiah. Now he promises to confirm the servant's word and to consummate the purpose of his messengers. In concrete terms, the word of restoration and hope meant that Jerusalem would be inhabited and the surrounding cities of Judah would be rebuilt. The ruins of the Babylonian

conquest of Judah would be raised up like new. This verse represents God's way of saying, "I personally guarantee it!"

Where Help Is (Isa. 45:1, 4-7). How does God work in this "real world" of ours? He uses real people. Cyrus the Great, king of Persia (550-530 B.C.), emancipated God's people. He commissioned the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. His proclamation is found in II Chronicles 36:22-23, Ezra 1:1-4, and Ezra 6:1-5. Though Cyrus did not view himself as God's servant, the Lord used him to bring about the release of his people and the promised restoration of Jerusalem (Isa. 45:4). The remaining verses (Isaiah 45:5-7) are dominated by the recurring phrase, "I am the Lord, and there is no other." Some things never change! Praise the Lord.

VanHorn is pastor, First Church, Columbia.

LIFE AND WORK

One and only God

John 1:1-5, 10-14:16-18

By Geneva England

When we attempt to explain the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) in human equivalents, our words fall woefully short. One explanation, though inadequate, describes the operation of the Godhead as a man who functions differently as a son to his parents, husband to his wife, and father to his children. There is only one living and true God who is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe and who reveals himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jesus Is the Word (1:1-2). Jesus came into the world as the Word of Truth. His birth, death, and resurrection fulfilled the promise of a redeemer prophe-

sied throughout the Old Testament. As God incarnate—all God—all man—he provides the only way for sinners to be saved.

John 20:31 contains the key to understanding how God manifested himself in Jesus Christ: "These [words] are written that, ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Jesus is Creator (1:3). Even if verse 3 stood alone in the Bible as proof of God's creation of the universe (but it doesn't), we should unreservedly accept this truth. Over fifty references attest to God's initial creative work and many more to his direct power over the animal



England

and plant kingdoms. For example, God miraculously assembled all the different animals for Noah's ark. Moreover, Jesus wielded such power that at his command the blind saw, the lame walked, the dead lived, and the storm quieted.

Assuredly, God did create the universe and is in control today. Sinners are without excuse because "God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature"—can be seen and understood in the physical things of creation (Rom. 1:20). Therefore, proof is not necessary; faith is!

Jesus is Light (1:4-5). Jesus confirmed himself as "the light come into the world," but "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). Only his followers "shall have the light of life" rather than "walk in darkness" (John 8:12). Light represents salvation and the good that proceeds from it; in contrast, dark-

ness represents evil and the dominion of Satan. Furthermore, Satan parades himself as the "angel of light" to confuse and misguide so that many practice a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. But remember, Jesus, the source of life and light, cannot be overcome by the darkness of evil.

Jesus is Transformer (1:10-13). Through Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, all believers are transformed from sinners bound for hell into sons of God. John proclaimed that the God exalted in Jewish synagogues as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is indeed this man Jesus. Unfortunately, the Jews preferred the Ten Commandments, temple sacrifices, and Talmud to believing that Jesus is the God of creation and the God in the Holy of Holies.

Jesus' claim, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," (John 14:6) means no one can approach God except through Jesus. What a glorious position we have in Christ! He trans-

formed us from sinners to saved; from orphans of the world to children of Heaven.

Jesus is Revealer (1:14, 16-18). God revealed himself to man when "the word [Christ] became flesh and dwelt among us" (v. 14). Jesus Christ, the visible counterpart of the invisible God, (Col. 1:15) revealed information about the Father through his teaching, his miracles, everything he did. Jesus told Philip, "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Paul explained that the Godhead bodily dwelt in Christ Jesus (Col. 2:9).

Yet Satan, the father of lies, still employs the same subtle seduction he began in the Garden of Eden: he questions God's sovereignty and perverts truth, thus leading many astray. Sadly, if sinners do not accept the one and only true God as Savior and Lord, they forfeit their last chance for eternal salvation from eternal damnation.

England is a member of First Church, Grenada.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village



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Pictured are Executive Director Ronny Robinson and BCV resident, Tanya Harvison (right) with Mrs. Dorothy Lampton and Granddaughter (center). Mrs. Lampton has established a Trust with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation in memory of her mother, Willene W. Crum. The Trust awards scholarship to a graduating senior who is a resident of The Baptist Children's Village. This year's recipient is Miss Tanya Harvison. Miss Harvison is attending Mississippi College this fall.



"First Street Singers" and "First Street Ringers" from FBC Rosenberg, Texas visited The Baptist Children's Village Deanash Campus in Wiggins Mississippi this summer. The 30-member group included BCV young people and staff in their "Endless Summer Ministry Tour".

The Road to Everlasting Life



God intends for all his children to live with him forever, but the road to everlasting life is blocked. To find that road you must:

Admit that you are a sinner.

There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

Accept God's love for you.

God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

Acknowledge Christ as Lord.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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CY NG YRUYCU LWG
KBNTU UTX TVVBKHCMA
LB LWG FVKCSLRKG,
LWBR FWTUL UBIG LWN
MGAWDDBRK TF LWN-
FGUY, NG MB AGUL

HEGL LXB: GCWL

Clue: H equals D

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hebrews One Nine.

Bennett wants U.S. return to moral roots

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Former U.S. drug czar and education secretary William Bennett wants to guide Americans back to their moral roots — way back — to a time when this country's founding fathers were penning the Constitution.

Bennett, co-director of Empower America, an organization dedicated to promoting conservative principles and ideas, hopes to provide a remedial moral education to Americans through his new book, "Our Sacred Honor," co-published by Broadman & Holman of the Baptist Sunday School Board and Simon and Schuster.

"This book is a large-scale cultural reformation project," Bennett said. "America has lost a lot of ground, culturally speaking. My aim is to share with a new generation of Americans the private and public reflections of the founding generation as to what we must do in our private and public lives to make America safe."

This book is Bennett's third volume dedicated to molding a virtuous America. In two previous books, "The Book of Virtues" (on the New York Times best-seller list for 88 weeks) and "The Moral Compass," Bennett endeavored to reawaken the lost art of moral education.

Bennett claims Americans are more worried about this country's cultural state than about anything else.

"I have argued for years that it is not the economy that is the source of our present discontent," Bennett said. He cited a recent Wirthlin Poll that revealed 72% of Americans say the country's problem is of a moral and spiritual nature, not an economic one.

Bennett said he is most concerned about America's younger generation.

"I don't think kids are growing up in a good cultural environment because we've lost a lot of territory. America leads the world in crime, murder, divorce, rape, pornography, drugs, and sexually transmitted diseases.



ON HONOR — In "Our Sacred Honor," William J. Bennett, co-director of Empower America, an organization dedicated to promoting conservative principles and ideas, presents a collection of writings by America's founders on piety, justice, patriotism, civility, prudence, and other moral issues that shaped America from its earliest days. Released in September, "Our Sacred Honor" is co-published by Broadman & Holman and Simon and Schuster. (BSSB photo)

"America is having good economic success, but our children are not learning to walk in justice. This country will be a failure if we don't teach them how to do that."

Bennett said the reason he believes he must go as far back as the country's founding fathers to locate virtuous teachings is because "the founders were quite simply extraordinary men and women with extraordinary insights into the ways of humankind."

"They aspired to greatness in their public lives and to piety and virtue in their pri-

vate lives. And we, all of us, could do more of the same."

While acknowledging a high regard for America's founding fathers and mothers, Bennett said he does not delude himself into thinking they were perfect.

"They, themselves, acknowledged if men were angels, there would be no need for government," Bennett said.

"I would like our founding fathers to be understood, and for people to genuinely develop an affection for them. I would like to raise them from immortality to mortality."

Bennett said he hopes "Our Sacred Honor," which is divided into seven chapters, each devoted to a specific virtue, accomplishes at least five objectives:

1) Memory. "I hope the book contributes to the memory of our founding American citizens for today's young people. They have inherited the greatest rulers ever, yet they do not know their founding fathers."

2) Unity. "I wanted to try to remind people that there are some unifying ideas to this republic. I want our citizens to feel a common bond with other citizens. The great strength of America is its diversity, but the idea of liberty is the greatest declaration of independence. It is a sign and symbol of equality."

3) Absolute and clear recognition of God as creator. "These men and women believed in the country they were establishing. Our country was established for a moral and religious people."

4) Raise the sights and goals of children. "The answer to a lot of what we need to do for children in this country is to raise them up. We need to raise their sights. The most important thing we can do is to raise the sights of those children by reminding them what they have inherited."

5) Book of advice. "Our forefathers thought about their lives and planned the country with an intensity that was extraordinary. Their advice is worthy; we would benefit from heeding it. They aspired to greatness in their public lives and to piety and virtue in their private lives. They took life seriously. One word you will not find in this book is, 'Whatever.'"

Broadman & Holman will release "Our Sacred Honor" to Christian bookstores in September.

Univ. of Mobile subpoenas served

MOBILE, Ala. (BP) — Federal investigations continue at the University of Mobile as subpoenas began arriving at the University of Mobile in July. Investigators sought records of board of trustees meetings and other documents.

Walter Hovell, acting president of the 2,700-student, Baptist affiliated institution, confirmed the probe centers on people who have been within the university setting and on the operation of the financially troubled school's campus in Nicaragua.

U.S. Attorney J. Don Foster denied the university itself is the target of any investigation yet. Foster said he would not deny investigations of people formerly associated with the university but neither would he confirm it.

The Alabama Baptist newsjournal learned July 14 the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) is investigating the university regarding financial concerns.

John P. Higgins Jr., deputy inspector general at DOE, informed The Alabama Baptist a Freedom of Information Act request it filed for public records on the university was denied because the records were "currently being used in an ongoing ... investigation, and we cannot release any information at this time."

Troy Morrison, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama convention, also went on record earlier this spring noting his knowledge of several federal investigations.

The university, particularly its operation of the Nicaragua campus, has been the center of controversy for the last four

years. That controversy boiled over this spring when Michael Magnoli, former president ousted in May after a 13-year tenure, informed trustees the school faced severe financial problems, including a budget shortfall of \$2.2 million this year.

Members of the Alabama Baptist State Convention executive committee took action in a June 3 meeting to recommend the convention's annual \$2 million in funding for the university be withheld if an acceptable plan to restore its financial stability was not submitted by July 15. University of Mobile trustees adopted a revised budget July 14 in response.

Whatley, board chairman, Leon Ballard, convention president, and Morrison circulated information in July on the University of Mobile to all Alabama Baptist ministers.

Urging pastors to be informed, the three leaders noted in a cover letter, "We believe the convention must let the university solve its own problems. Any involvement ... could result in dire financial consequences for the convention. We must protect the missionary enterprises of the convention."

In 1994, messengers to the annual Alabama Baptist state convention affirmed an agreement limiting financial support of the university's Latin American Branch Campus in Nicaragua to gifts specifically generated for that campus and funds generated from that campus. Another part of the agreement required trustees to return to the Mobile campus about \$2.3 million used to initiate the LABC, a figure that has since grown to \$3.3 million.